



October 16, 2017 | 9:00 – 11:30 am
Conference Rooms 5 & 6, 10 Park Plaza, Boston

Meeting Summary

Introduction:

Pat Field (CBI) opened the meeting at 9 AM and reviewed the agenda. The Working Group approved the September meeting summary. Elizabeth Cooper (CBI) reviewed the community feedback received at the September 25 public forum.¹

Discussion:

Scott Peterson (CTPS) presented the results of CTPS' analysis of variations of three infrastructure alternatives.

2-stop modification of the Orange Line spur:

He first reviewed the analysis of a two-stop variation of the proposed Orange Line spur, with stops at Route 16 and Gateway Center/Wynn Resort. Mr. Peterson explained that the two-stop version attracted fewer riders than the three- or five-stop options did, and that 80-90% of the increases in ridership shown were due to the improvements in headways for the line that were included in the model. The two-station option would cost approximately \$1.3 billion, including the cost for a new car maintenance facility. Working Group members asked for more clarification regarding why the two-stop option, which required fewer additional cars than the five-station option, would need the maintenance facility. Jay Monty (Everett) suggested that the cost of the maintenance facility should not be born by the proposal for the Orange Line extension alone. He emphasized that the maintenance facility and the headway improvements included in the spur proposal would benefit the entire system and not just riders served by the spur. Mayor Curtatone (Somerville) and Mayor DeMaria (Everett) urged additional examination of the judgment that transit expansion and the purchase of additional rail cars would require a large maintenance facility to be built.

Modification of the Silver Line extension:

Mr. Peterson presented the results of a variation of the previously examined Silver Line extension; in this analysis, a right of way behind the Wynn Resort was used to give a dedicated right of way to the BRT service. The modification utilizing the right of way behind the casino saved five to 10 minutes on northbound Silver Line trips. The right of way option created 1,200 more new trips than the version of the Silver Line extension without the right of way.

Modification of the I-93 Northbound on-ramp:

¹ The presentation and materials from the public forum, as well as the synthesis, can be found at <http://www.lowermysticstudy.org>, under the "Downloads" tab.



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Mark Abbott (CTPS) presented the results of an off-model analysis of a modification of the previously modeled I-93 Northbound on-ramp, in which the on-ramp would be located at the Route 1 (Tobin Bridge) ramp entrance intersection rather than at City Square. The movement of the ramp to the Route 1 ramp intersection increased capacity for left turns and helped reduced turning delay due to a double left turn lane. In this modification, turning delay at City Square was reduced compared to the previous ramp option, especially in the morning peak hours. Little impact was seen on Austin Street. The longer ramp could impact developable parcels in the vicinity. Additionally, the cost was estimated to be about 25% higher than the previous variation with the shorter ramp, due to the longer ramp and the cost of constructing the elevated ramp. The ramp modification operated slightly better than the previous version but did not attract a lot of new traffic, with the over all effects on Sullivan Square very similar.

Commuter rail stop at Wynn Casino/Gateway Center

Mr. Peterson presented the results of an analysis of a walk access commuter rail stop at the Wynn Resort/Gateway Center on the Rockport/Newburyport line. The stop would add 2 minutes to the over all run time. The impact on ridership was about 400 riders daily, with 300 inbound and 100 outbound. Jacqui Krum (Wynn) asked whether the analysis assumed the continued operation of shuttles from the casino to the Orange Line. Mr. Peterson clarified that this analysis had assumed the Casino shuttles to and from the Orange Line were still in use. He estimated that the ridership on the resort/Gateway Center stop of commuter rail being examined would double or triple if no shuttles were operated. Mayor Curtatone asked whether the commuter rail stop was analyzed with the proposed pedestrian bridge to connect to Assembly Row and the Partners complex. Mr. Peterson clarified that it was not, and that the impact of the bridge on ridership at the proposed stop was unknown.

Selecting a final package for modeling:

Mr. Field reviewed the decision-making process to select a final package to analyze, which would form the basis for final recommendations from the Working Group. He also emphasized the value to the group's recommendations if a unified vision were to be reached among the members. The group reviewed some package options developed by the project staff. The group discussed a desire to include TDM policies in the package and called for clarification from each of the Cities regarding how much and what kinds of TDM policies would appeal to them. Mr. Peterson explained that a certain level of increased bus service acting as feeders to other transit could necessitate improvements in headways of the Orange Line to mitigate capacity issues. Mayor DeMaria and Mayor Curtatone commented on the need to expand transit to unlock development. Mayor Curtatone urged the group to act boldly and create opportunity for underserved groups in its recommendations. Mr. Monty urged a long-term view in planning transit expansion and infrastructure investment. Chris Osgood (Boston) emphasized the importance of articulating the group's highest aspirations. Marc Draisen (MAPC) encouraged the group to include land use and mitigation policies among the recommendations that the



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group would develop. Several group members commented on the importance of including bike/pedestrian infrastructure in recommendations.

The group discussed the value in all of the analysis done, and emphasized that the analysis of promising alternatives that were not included in the recommendations should be passed forward to be used in subsequent studies looking more specifically at particular projects and/or areas.

The Group agreed to make a final determination of what components would be included in the final package at the November Working Group meeting. Working Group members also stated the need to incorporate funding and phasing recommendations into the concluding report. Mr. Field reviewed the key points of discussion and the schedule for upcoming meetings. The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 AM.